

**LAW ENFORCEMENT CONSOLIDATION TASK FORCE
TRAINING COMMITTEE REPORT
NOVEMBER 2011**

DRAFT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Law Enforcement Consolidation Training Committee was charged with reviewing and determining if duplication and redundancy exist related to the state's law enforcement training programs. The specific focus of this review only examined the training functions within each agency related to sworn/certified officers and did not include any considerations for non-sworn or civilian training. After review the Committee was directed to make recommendations if appropriate to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency under the current delivery system and structure.

The Committee is comprised of the following representatives:

Captain Alan Hill	Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office
Major Nicholas Monday	Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco
Chief Cheryl DeGross	Agricultural Law Enforcement
Captain James Mann	Office of the Attorney General
Major Ron Cave	Department of Environmental Protection
Major Leroy Smith	Florida Highway Patrol
Major Mark Warren	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Captain Brian Hudson	Florida Highway Patrol
Director Michael Crews	Florida Department of Law Enforcement (Chair)
Commissioner Jerry Bailey	Florida Department of Law Enforcement (Exec. Sponsor)

The Committee held its initial meeting in September 2011 to determine the focus of the group's work and develop the Team Charter. The Charter included the Issue, Scope of Work, Team Goals, Work Product, and Timeframe for Completion.

During the initial meeting the Committee unanimously decided to examine four (4) specific areas related to law enforcement training; Basic Recruit; Advanced/Specialized/Mandatory Retraining; Agency Specific; and Facilities currently utilized for training delivery. It should be noted that the Basic Recruit and Advanced/Specialized/Mandatory Retraining is the programs directed by Florida Statute and the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission.

In preparation for the next meeting, held on October 5, 2011, each committee member was asked to compile agency profile information to include an overview of their current training program with the total number of sworn and non-sworn personnel assigned to the training unit/function and a description and overview on how their internal training programs work.

The profile information provide by each committee member revealed a diverse level of responsibility related to the training delivery and function within their respective agency. Only two (2) agencies, FHP and FWC have the responsibility for the delivery of basic recruit training within their agencies. It is also noted that FHP and FWC provide basic recruit training only to those individuals employed by their respective agencies. All other agencies hire individuals who have already obtained their Florida certification and have worked in a certified position prior to employment.

A key point of discussion related to the delivery of basic recruit training by FHP and FWC and the benefit in having the ability to advertise, screen, test and conduct comprehensive background investigations prior to employment for their future members. While no other agencies are impacted or responsible for the delivery of basic recruit training, there was unanimous agreement from the committee members that due to the uniqueness and differences in the duties and responsibilities of a FHP Trooper and FWC Officer the opportunity to process and select individuals with specific skill sets directly related to these positions was critical to the success in meeting their Mission.

A few of the major benefits discussed involved broader applicant pools, minimizing retention and replacement issues and costs, discipline issues, and the opportunity to instill the agency culture and expectations from the onset of basic training. Last and perhaps most important, the committee agreed there were no cost savings by allowing one of the Commission's other certified training academies to deliver basic training to prospective FHP and FWC employees. The current training costs for staff and facilities are absorbed by the affected agencies vs. having to pay for the training costs at local academies.

BACKGROUND

Training personnel ranged from full-time training units with a total of 22 sworn and non-sworn personnel to a minimum of one (1) part-time training coordinator; all other agencies employ a combination of training personnel. However, it should be noted that in these agencies the training personnel perform a variety of other law enforcement related duties and their training responsibility is only a portion of their overall duties.

Regardless of the current structure for each agency, all utilize officers and employees within their agencies to provide assistance with the delivery of agency specific, in-service and mandatory retraining topics. Additionally, this training is typically delivered in a decentralized manner utilizing their own field and regional offices as well as training facilities of other local and state agencies in which they have developed partnerships over the years.

After much discussion, it was the opinion of the committee that state law enforcement training currently operates in a consolidated manner by virtue of the fact that the current training needs, resources and funding are coordinated through the Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission's (CJSTC) Region 15 Training Council and administered through the Florida Public Safety Training Institute (FPSI). Agencies rely on available instructors and facilities, and jointly decide on the overall training needs for state law enforcement officers, and decide the most appropriate expenditure of training trust fund dollars to maximize diminishing funds while still providing quality, current and job-related training opportunities.

STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT TRAINING

BASIC RECRUIT TRAINING

As previously mentioned, the FHP and FWC are the only two (2) state law enforcement agencies responsible for the coordination and delivery of basic training to their prospective officers. This training is delivered through a centralized system at the FPSI which allows FHP, FWC and all other agencies to utilize instructors, resources, training funds and facilities as needed. The basic training program includes very specific areas of instruction. This consolidated approach allows state agencies to utilize instructors which may not be employees of their agency, to provide instruction in areas where specific skills and/or certifications are required. While no other agencies are impacted by the delivery of basic training, the committee unanimously supported the notion that the benefits seen with the current system far exceed any other considerations related to effectiveness and efficiencies.

Additionally, under the current training delivery system there is in all likelihood a cost savings when taking into account issues such as recruitment, retention and discipline. The ability to recruit, test, interview and select individuals with the knowledge, skills and abilities pertinent to the duties of an FHP Trooper or FWC Officer is the most effective and efficient manner of insuring that each agency is prepared to meet the demands of the job both in the present and future.

It should be pointed out that one area of discussion revolved around the issue of pay/salary while they receive their training. While this is a cost which could be avoided if agencies were to select individuals who have already completed their basic training at one of the Commission's 41 certified training academies, this cost is off-set by the considerations previously mentioned.

Although this is not to be viewed as a criticism, it was recognized by the committee that the "quality of instruction and quality of recruit" varies greatly across the state. The ability to instill the culture and expectations of an agency from the first day of basic training pays huge dividends for the agency as well as in the long term career of an officer with the agency.

ADVANCED/SPECIALIZED/MANDATORY RETRAINING

The CJSTC's Region 15 Training Council is responsible for the coordination and development of the state's law enforcement agencies' training needs. Additionally, it is through this coordinated effort that agencies maximize the use of their Trust Fund monies for CJSTC Advanced and Specialized Course delivery. Each state agency is represented on the Region 15 Council and is provided an opportunity to provide input as to their specific agency needs as well as training needs as a whole for all of state law enforcement.

It is through this process that multi-agency training is available and allows agencies to participate in hi-liability, instructor and other job related training programs without any associated training costs. The training Trust Fund monies allow agencies and officers to attend any of the Commission's Advanced or Specialized Training Program at no cost.

While Florida Statute and current Commission Rules dictate the training requirements for officers to maintain certification (40 hours every 4 years), these minimum standards do not fulfill the needs of state officers as it relates to the challenges and ever changing demands they face each day. Current Mandatory Retraining requirements are but a small portion of the overall training officers must be exposed to in order to perform their jobs to the best of their ability. In addition to these minimum standards, agencies must maintain the flexibility to insure their officers receive training driven by their current positions; officer safety, changing trends and emerging conditions, etc.

There are ways to minimize the costs associated with this training the most relevant being the use of distance or on-line training that will be further discussed under “recommendations.”

AGENCY SPECIFIC TRAINING

This training is driven specifically by each individual agency’s need. Due to the tremendous differences in the roles, responsibilities and functions of each state law enforcement agency, agency specific training is vital to each agency’s overall success.

During our discussions some agencies indicated they receive or serve as a pass through to local agencies, federal monies which are tied directly to specific training being provided to those officers which allows them to enforce federal laws in the performance of their state duties. Concern was expressed that the incorporating of officers outside the scope of those specific to these areas could perhaps jeopardize future funds or awards.

It is critical that all agencies have the flexibility to provide proper training to their members specific to their core mission, statutorily mandated responsibilities, and to further enhance their skills and knowledge in the performance of their day-to-day assignments.

FACILITIES

As mentioned previously, state agencies currently use the FPSI which provides a state of the art facility for training purposes. Additionally, ALL state law enforcement agencies use their existing offices/facilities or rely heavily on the local criminal justice agencies to minimize the financial impact of training delivery to their officers in the field. FPSI provides the ability for agencies to not only coordinate state-wide training efforts for all agencies but allows agencies to coordinate the use of the facilities and meet the demands of all. FPSI is equipped to provide facilities specific to the needs of all agencies where as the CJSTC’s other academies may not have these types of facilities. Also, agencies do not have to compete for use of this facility since all scheduling is controlled through FPSI. As a result of the current agreement with FPSI and the Region 15 Training Council, there is no cost associated with the use of this facility. Utilizing other academies across the state would require agencies to incur costs that would be determined by the amount of training conducted.

EFFICIENCY OPPORTUNITIES

The efficiencies related to state law enforcement training are already exhibited with the current consolidated training efforts through Region 15 and FPSI. Multi-agency training, maximizing the training trust fund monies, and utilizing instructors from all state agencies to assist with the delivery of training, provide a significant cost-savings to the state. Partnerships with local agencies for instructional assistance and facility use allow agencies to provide quality, job-related training to all of their officers on a state-wide basis with little or no cost. It was agreed that we must continue to look for more cost effective ways to provide training to our officers as training funds and opportunities continue to decline.

CONSOLIDATION OPPORTUNITIES

It was the sentiment of the Training Committee that state law enforcement agencies already work in a consolidated system through their current Region 15 association. Shared resources, quality training, and minimizing travel and training costs are all significant cost savings recognized throughout each agency. Additionally, the committee feels that any substantive changes related to further consolidating the current training delivery system for state agencies would have a negative impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of our overall training.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As it relates to Mandatory Retraining, it is the unanimous recommendation of the committee that all state law enforcement agencies be required to satisfy the statutorily mandated portions of the mandatory retraining requirements via “distance or on-line learning.”

Through the Florida Criminal Justice Executive Institute, 22 on-line training programs exist which include all of the statutorily mandated courses. These courses are provided free of charge and would eliminate the costs that agencies absorb for instructional, travel and other related expenses when delivered in the typical classroom setting. These courses are available to all officers and provide a mechanism for quality training at no cost to the officer or agency.